



The RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults) is for non-baptized adults and baptized adult Christians who desire full communion in the Roman Catholic Church. We also welcome baptized Catholics who have yet to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. It is a process of faith-sharing, learning, and exploration with specific liturgical rites usually beginning in September, with sacraments celebrated at the Easter Vigil and a period of reflection and celebration which follows. Participants are introduced to the liturgy, life and teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.

The RCIA is best described as a journey. While there are regular meetings and discussion time, each candidate is called by Christ through the movement of the Holy Spirit at their own pace. Most will be received into the Church in one year, but candidates are invited to take their own time. Some have even been known to step back for a period of weeks or months. No one should feel pressure to complete the journey.

While meetings begin in September with Scripture readings, reflections on the Gospels, and a study of the customs, traditions, doctrine and history of the Church, candidates are officially welcomed at Mass during the season of Advent (which begins in November or December, just prior to Christmas). Participants are encouraged to participate in our regular Sunday Masses, although they may not be able to receive the Eucharist.

On the First Sunday of Lent (the liturgical season which prepares us for Easter) Catechumens (those not already baptized) and Candidates (those who are baptized in another Christian Church or who wish to be confirmed) will be received by the Archbishop at the Cathedral in what is known as the Rite of Election.

The liturgical season of Lent is a special time of reflection and prayer. During this time the candidates participate in three public celebrations of the scrutinies. They take place during the Third, Fourth and Fifth Sundays of Lent. They are also presented with the Creed and the Our Father.

At the Easter Vigil (Holy Saturday) all who have been participating in the RCIA are welcomed formally into the community of believers through receiving the Sacraments of Initiation – Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist.

Mystagogia means “leading into the mystery.” After Easter there is a time of reflection and celebration called Mystagogy. We continue to explore the deep mystery of our faith – and what it means to live a life of faith, prayer and service. This takes place during the Easter Season (usually April to sometime in June).



You are not alone. At Saint Patrick's, the entire community is encouraged to pray for those journeying through the RCIA. There is a team who help guide, support and instruct. Team members share their faith and answer questions. They participate at meetings. You will also have a sponsor (called a godparent for those who are not baptized) who will assist you on your journey. Sponsors are normally members of our parish community. However, you may have a sponsor who is a relative, close friend or colleague. This can be discussed with the RCIA Team before you journey through the process.

The RCIA invites;

- those who are unbaptized. They are called catechumens.
- those who were baptized into another Christian denomination and wish to enter into full communion with the Catholic Church. They are called candidates.
- those who were baptized Catholic but who have not received Confirmation. They may or may not currently be receiving the Eucharist. They are also considered candidates.

This is an important decision. It is an exciting one where you will deepen your relationship with God. No matter what the reason, becoming a participant in the RCIA shows an openness to God and to God's call in your life. If you have any questions you can email frsteve@basilica.ca or call our parish office at 613-233-1125.